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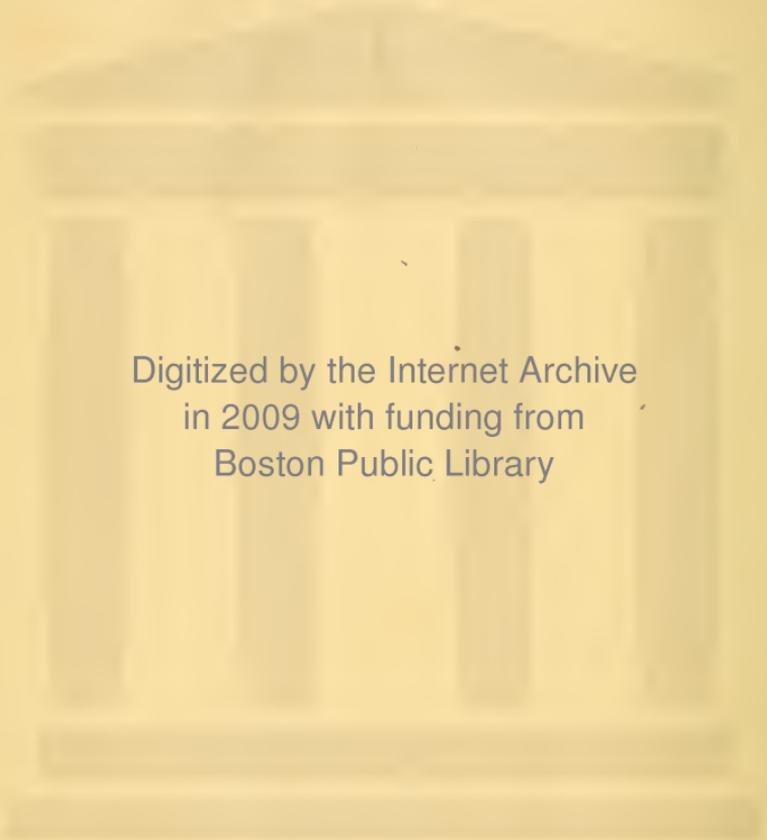
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DR. HARE'S LETTER
TO
THE EPISCOPAL CLERGY,

MOST RESPECTFULLY OFFERING TO SUBMIT TO THEIR CONSIDERATION,

NEW AND IRREFRAGABLE
EVIDENCE OF HUMAN IMMORTALITY;

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED A BRIEF

SKETCH OF THE SPIRIT-WORLD,

AND OF THE

MORAL INFLUENCE OF SPIRITUALISM;

ALSO,

3498.157

HEAVEN AND HELL, AS DESCRIBED BY SCRIPTURE AND BY
SPIRITUALISM, CONTRASTED.

~~~~~  
If God can creatures make to suit his will,  
Foresee if they can his design fulfill,  
Wherefore those creatures to trial expose,  
Traits to find out which he thus foreknows?  
~~~~~

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*Shortly will be published, Dr. Hare's Narrative of Experimental Investigation of the  
Theoretical Manifestations which led to his conversion, &c., &c.*

### POSTSCRIPT.

THANKS be to God, the author has, within a few days, acquired sufficiently the attributes of a medium, to hold direct communication with his spirit-friends, through the instruments which he has himself contrived. His powers are as yet humble, but amply sufficient to prove directly to his own reason and senses, that spirits do exist obedient to his call, and able to give direct, irrefragable evidence of the truth of Spiritualism.

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## NEW EVIDENCE OF IMMORTALITY.



LETTER FROM DR. HARE TO THE CLERGY OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH, OFFERING TO LAY BEFORE THEM THE NEW EVIDENCE OF IMMORTALITY. Submitted to the late Convention, Philad'a, May 15, 1855.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIRS—Having, from my youth, been on friendly terms with the clergy of the Episcopal Church, within the pale of which I was born and christened; having, in fact, had among the clergy of that Church, some excellent friends and relatives, it has been a source of regret that I have not been able to see doctrines deeply affecting the happiness of mankind, in the same light. I am, however, fully sensible of the kindness and courtesy with which I have been treated by clergymen in general, and especially by those of the Church above designated. I have always been under the belief that in no part of the globe, nor at any period of human history, has a priesthood existed as moral, as sincere and truly pious as those of my country; and among that priesthood, I believe, none have stood higher in these qualifications than such as are of the Episcopal Church.

It is happy for me that of late I have in one respect, found myself more in accordance with the Christian Clergy; I allude here, to the awakening of perfect confidence in the immortality of the soul. There was on this subject, heretofore, this difference between my sentiments and those of my clerical friends, that while I hoped for a future state, I was no less skeptical respecting the evidence of witnesses who lived some thousand years ago, than of those who have in modern times alleged themselves to have witnessed supernatural manifestations. I required in the former case, no less than in the latter, intuitive proof; or the consistent testimony of independent observers, having sufficient sense, knowledge and integrity to make reliable witnesses.\*

Happily in the case of Spiritualism, both of these tests have been afforded to me; so that I now believe in a future state no less firmly than the orthodox Christian.

Like St. Paul, in the case of Christianity, I entered upon the investigation of Spiritualism, with a view to refutation; but the very instru-

\*It struck me to be a sufficient proof of the absence of these qualifications in an Evangelist, that he should represent Christ at the same time as the Son of God, and yet trace his genealogy through Joseph to Abraham.

Abraham submitted his wife successively to the pleasure of the king of Gerar and the king of Egypt, and turned his son and that son's mother into the wilderness to starve. It is difficult to conceive how a minute proportion of his blood could do honour to the soul even of an honest carpenter.

ments which I contrived to accomplish that object, produced the opposite effect.

If human testimony is not to be taken when advanced by contemporaries, known to be conscientious, truthful, and well-informed, how is it to be relied on, with respect to those of whom we know nothing available, besides what their own writings mention?\*

I am prepared to submit a communication respecting the spirit-world from my father, sanctioned by a convocation of spirits, whose approbation was manifested by means which no mortal could pervert.

The practical influence on my mind has been to make me far more happy, to remove all fear of death, and to render me more watchful as to my deportment in life. I know that my sainted parents, and other relatives and friends, my children who died in infancy, are around me witnessing every act, and exercising a limited power over my safety and my health.

Mourning for the dead now seems to be groundless, and at all events can be indulged only upon selfish considerations. But who would grieve deeply at a transient separation, even for years, from friends made happier by the change, when sure of a happy reunion ultimately?

No evidence of any important truth in science can be shown to be more unexceptionable than that which I have received of this glorious fact, that Heaven is really "at hand," and that our relatives, friends and acquaintances who are worthy of happiness, while describing themselves as ineffably happy, are still progressing to higher felicity, and while hovering aloft and in our midst, are taking interest in our welfare with an augmented zeal or affection; so that by these means, they may be a solace to us in despite of death.

As the reverend clergy of the Episcopal Church are about to meet in Philadelphia, I deem it my duty to afford them an opportunity of hearing the evidence on which I rely; and which, with *due effort*, they can have subjected to their own intuition.

Should the clergy deem it expedient to listen to my exposition, I shall be ready to answer any queries which may be made.

I am aware that there may be considerations which may justify the clergy in declining to hear me. I have never, in my own case, deemed it wise to seek abstract right at the expense of practical evil. I would not urge persons in certain official stations to become converts to Spiritualism, lest it should by consequent unpopularity interfere with their usefulness, as in the case of Judge Edmonds; and a like objection must arise as to the conversion of clergymen, so far as to bring their convictions in competition with their professional vocation. Orthodox Chris-

\*It injures, in my mind, the credibility of a witness, when he states as fact what involves a contradiction, or absurdity by the premises narrated. Thus it appears to be a contradiction to represent that a being, *destitute* of everything, could tempt one *possessed* of everything; that Satan, a malefactor, dependent for his existence, and any power which he might exercise, upon the Godhead, could tempt a member of that heavenly firm, by the offer of a portion of the partnership property.

Again, I should question the veracity or discretion of a witness, who should represent that to cure two men of madness, or to relieve them from devils, it could be necessary, or right, to rob an owner of his pork, or a herd of swine of their lives; the immortal devils remaining of course uninjured.

tians are generally educated to believe not only that the revelation on which they rely, is true, but that no other can be justifiable. Hence they are evidently displeased that spiritualists should allege themselves to have come by other means to that belief in immortality which is admitted on all sides to be the greatest comfort under the afflictions to which temporal life is liable.

There is, moreover, this discordancy in doctrine. Agreeably to Scripture, man is placed here for probation, and is liable to be *eternally* punished, if he prove delinquent. According to Spiritualism, man is placed here for progression, and when he goes to the next world, still will have the opportunity to progress, however wicked he may be when he departs this life.

It is conceived by spiritualists that if, as the orthodox allege, God be omnipotent, he can make his creatures to suit his will; if he be omniscient, he must know what they are when made; and if he be prescient, he can foresee what they will be, and consequently cannot have the smallest conceivable motive for exposing them to probation.

I foresee that it may not be deemed expedient to take any notice of this letter; but, whatever may be the result in this way, does not interfere with the propriety of my putting it in your power to avail yourselves of my offer; since I have a sanction from a higher source, the spirit of the immortal Washington, the proofs of whose communion with me, I am prepared to submit to any respectable inquirers.

I am aware that this language would, a few years ago, have made me attach the idea of insanity to the author; but this cannot nevertheless, in the slightest degree, be deducible from it now, from the notorious fact that the same monomania is never entertained by any two persons, and in *my hallucination*, if it be *such*, there are a multitude of participators. That is to say, there are a multitude of persons of every grade, who believe that they have communicated with their spirit-friends, as I have with mine; and who, like me, have believed themselves to have held communion with the spirits of some of the most distinguished men who have departed this life. A faith in the miracles of the New Testament may as well be adduced as insanity, as belief in spiritual manifestations under these circumstances.

The fact that manifestations have been made and truthfully described, has been admitted by the Catholic Church, but are ascribed to Satanic agency.

Let the doctrines of Spiritualism, and those of the Church in question, be compared, in order to determine which owes most to Satan.

The existence of a devil being admitted, was there ever a more fertile source of diabolical intolerance, than the idea that a peculiar belief being necessary to save men's souls from hell fire, any temporal evil to which mortals might be subjected to coerce belief, would be as justifiable as the forcible extirpation of an incipient cancer from the body of a child unwilling to submit to the operation? If ever there was a devil's agency, it may be seen in the auto-da-fe, the inquisition and the massacre of St. Bartholemew's day.

Of the same devilish character was the execution of Servetus by Calvin, or the persecution of the Quakers and Witches by the Puritans.

Respectfully, your well-wisher,

ROBERT HARE.

## TO THE CLERGY OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

May 23d, 1855.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIRS—The offer which I recently made to you, of submitting the evidence recently afforded to me of the existence of the Spirit-World, has not been accepted. For declining my proposal, no doubt you have, as the world goes, done what was best for the interests of the Church.

In a publication which I am preparing, an effort will be made to submit the evidence in question to the public, of which you form a highly respectable portion.

Meanwhile, however, as a delay of two months may take place, I deem it expedient to give a sketch of some of the impressions received from the inhabitants of the spirit-world.

The information on which the following exposition is made, has been derived from my spirit-friends, by communications received from them during the last twelve months, through various media, assisted by instruments contrived by myself. I have had communications from the same spirits through different media, and from different spirits through the same medium.\*

According to the spirits above mentioned, there are seven spheres recognised in the spirit-world. This terrestrial abode forms the first, or rudimental sphere.

At the distance of about sixty miles from the terrestrial surface, the spirit-world commences. It consists of six bands or zones, designated as spheres, surrounding the earth, so as to have one common centre with it, and with each other. An idea of these rings may be formed from that of the planet Saturn, excepting that they are compara-

\* I owe much information respecting the spheres to my father, my sister, brother, and to William Blodget, a most intimate and much beloved friend who died more than forty years ago. Also, to the spirit of one with whom I was unacquainted when in this world, but who has been extremely zealous in effecting my conversion, and in assisting and instructing me since that object was attained. This spirit always signs the initials of his name as W. W.

I have also communicated with the spirits of Washington, of Franklin, W. E. Channing, Isaac T. Hopper, Judge Hopkinson, Francis Hopkinson, Esq.; and have had sixty-four queries answered by a convocation of spirits, who authenticated the information previously received, as well as their replies, under conditions which put it out of the power of the medium or any mortal whatever to pervert the indication of their testimony.

There were, as I am informed, a galaxy of distinguished spirits among my audience when I lectured at Boston.

The following list of the spirits who were present at my lecture at Boston, has been given by my sister, and confirmed by W. W., and others:—

Spirits of a high order were present at your lecture in Boston. The spirit of Benjamin Franklin stood immediately behind you, to prompt you; Washington, William H. Harrison, Daniel Webster, J. Q. Adams, H. Clay, Jefferson, stood on your right—the poets Moore, Byron, Burns, Shelley and H. K. White, on your left—while innumerable spirit-intelligences filled the hall. Father, mother and myself, were cheering you with our influence, and we crowned your brows with unfading flowers. Many manifestations were given, of which the raps were most conspicuous. Channing and Blodget were near you. It would be impossible to give the names of all present.

tively much nearer to their planet, and that they have their broad surfaces parallel to the planet, and at right angles to the ecliptic, instead of being like Saturn's rings, so arranged that their surfaces are parallel to the plane in which his ecliptic exists.

Supposing the earth to be represented by a globe of thirteen and a half inches in diameter, the lower surface of the lowest of the spiritual spheres, if represented in due proportion to the actual distance from the earth, would be only one-tenth of an inch from the terrestrial surface.

The bands observed over the regions in the planet Jupiter, which correspond with our tropical regions, agree very well in relative position with those which are assigned to our spiritual spheres. They are probably the spiritual spheres of that planet.

The interval between the lower boundaries of the first spiritual and the second is estimated at thirty miles as a maximum, but this interval is represented to be less, as the spheres between which it may exist are more elevated, or remote, from the terrestrial centre.

Each sphere is divided into six "circles" or planes. More properly these may be described as concentric zones, occupying each about one-sixth of the space comprised within the boundaries of the sphere.

There being six sub-divisions to each of the six spheres, in all there must be thirty-six gradations.

These boundaries are not marked by any visible partition, but spirits have in this respect a peculiar sense, which makes them feel when they are passing the boundaries of one sphere in order to get to the next.

This allegation of the existence of an invisible spirit-world within the clear azure space, intervening between the surface of this globe and the lunar orbit, may startle the reader; and yet this idea may have been presented by Scripture to the same mind, without awakening skepticism.

It was urged by a spirit-friend—is it more wonderful that you should find our habitation invisible, than that we are invisible?

It is plain that between the lowest degrees of vice, ignorance and folly, and the highest degrees of virtue, learning and wisdom, there are many gradations. When we are translated to the spheres, we take a rank proportional to our merit, which seems to be there intuitively susceptible of estimation by the law above alluded to, of the grossness being greater as the character is more imperfect.

Both the spirits and spheres are represented as having a gradation in constitutional refinement, so that the sphere to which a spirit belongs is intuitively manifest. Rank is determined by a sort of moral specific gravity, in which merit is inversely as weight.

Another means of distinction is a circumambient halo by which every spirit is accompanied, which passes from a darkness to effulgency, as the spirit belongs to a higher plane.

Even mortals are alleged to be surrounded with a halo visible to spirits, although not to themselves. Intuitively from the extent and nature of this halo, spirits perceive the sphere to which any mundane being belongs. The effulgency of the higher spirits is represented as splendid.

As soon as emancipated from their corporeal tenement spirits enter the spheres, and are entitled to a station higher in direct proportion to their morality, wisdom, knowledge and intellectual refinement.

The first spiritual sphere, or the second in the whole series, is as large as all the other five above it. This is the Hell or Hades of the spirit-world, where all sensual, malevolent, selfish beings, reside.

The next sphere above this, or the third in the whole series, is the habitation of all well-meaning persons, however bigoted, fanatical or ignorant. Here they are tolerably happy.

In proportion as spirits improve in purity, benevolence and wisdom, they ascend. They may ascend as love-spirits, in consequence of the two first-mentioned attributes; but cannot go up on account of wisdom alone. A knave, however wise, cannot advance in the spheres.

There are, in fact, two modes of ascent—love, so called, and love and wisdom united. Those who go up in love are called *love-spirits*—those who unite both qualifications are called *wisdom-spirits*.

A feminine spirit, who had been remarkable for her disinterested devotion to her relatives and friends, ascended almost forthwith to the fifth sphere. My friend, W. W., had an ascent equally rapid to the same sphere. Yet another spirit, who was fully as free from vice as either of those above alluded to, took many years to ascend in *wisdom* to the fifth sphere, not being satisfied to rise unless accompanied by the attribute of wisdom, as well as love.

Spirit B. alleged, that because he was a free-thinker he went up more quickly than another spirit. A. being questioned, admitted that B. had got on more speedily, in consequence of superior liberality.

Christ is in the seventh or highest sphere. Washington is in the seventh sphere.

In the spheres diversity of creed has no influence, excepting so far as its adoption indicates badness of heart and narrowness of mind, and has been of a nature to injure the moral and intellectual character.

Degradation ensues as an inevitable consequence of vice, and as the means of reform, *not as a vindictive punishment*. God is represented as all love, and is never named without the most zealous devotion.

Spirits in any sphere can descend into any sphere below that to which they belong, but cannot ascend above this sphere. They are surrounded by a halo, which is brighter in proportion as their sphere is higher.

They have an intuitive power of judging of each other and of mortals. Attachments originating in this life are strengthened, while hatred passes away. The spirits in the upper spheres have "*ineffable*" happiness. The sufferings of those below are negative rather than positive. They are made to feel shame at a degradation which is rendered intuitively evident to themselves and all other spirits.

But all are capable of improvement, so as to have elevation and happiness within their reach sooner or later. The higher spirits are always ready to assist sinners by kind admonition.

Infants grow and are instructed.

My brother alleges himself to hold the office of a teacher. By teachers, spirits fresh from this world, called the "*rudimental sphere*," are examined to determine their rank.

Spirits are carried along with our globe by their moral affections and affinity, which upon them acts as gravitation upon material bodies. They are just where they wish themselves to be, as they move in obedience to their moral impulses or aspirations; not having a gross material body to carry along with them.

Spirits of the higher spheres control more or less those below them in station, who are sent by them to impress mortals virtuously.

They are not allowed to interpose directly, so as to alter the course of

events upon earth. Spirits are not allowed to aid in any measures to obtain wealth.

Blessed spirits are endowed with a power competent to the gratification of every rational want. They enjoy, as I am authorised to say by the convocation of spirits, to whom allusion has been made, a power like that ascribed to the Genius of Aladdin's Lamp.

There is nothing of the nature of marketable property in the spirit-world; since every inhabitant above the second sphere, or Hades, has as much as he wants, and needs no more to purchase the requisites for his enjoyment or subsistence, than we have need to buy air to breathe.

It ought also to be explained that after spirits reach the highest plane or circle of the seventh sphere, they are represented as being entitled to enter the supernal heaven, taking place among the ministering angels of the Deity.

Another feature is, that whether the connubial tie endures or not is optional. Hence those who have not found their matrimonial connexion a source of happiness in this world, are at liberty to seek a new hymenial union in the spirit-world. Where there have been a plurality of husbands or wives, those unite who find themselves happy in doing so. But, as if to indemnify mortals for the crosses in marriage or in love, or for the dreariness of mundane celibacy, all are destined in the spheres to find a counterpart with whom they may be happy, there being peculiarly ardent pleasurable emotions attached to the connubial union in the spheres, which mortals cannot understand.

Infants, on account of their higher purity, have in this point of view, as much elevation as their relatives who attain great worldly pre-eminence.

A brother of a medium reported himself, spelling his name out in full; he left this life at the age of thirteen months. I inquired if he had taught himself to spell; he said he had been instructed. He had previously, to his mother, as I had been told by her, alleged his stature as a spirit, to have grown in proportion to his age.

I have in the spirit-world two sons, one of whom died, thirteen months old, in 1813; the other, five months old, in 1825. Both have been to communicate with me. I subjoin a letter received from the younger:

"MY DEAR FATHER:—I made a very brief communication to you through the medium of Mr. Gordon, which was my first successful effort to control the human organism. It has been long known to me that spirits could manifest themselves to mortals; and that they have always held communion with their brethren in the flesh, is not new to me. The law is as natural as gravitation, and like it, I presume, will endure forever. But so great has been, and still is, the superstition of the masses, and to such an extent has man's mental vision been obscured by his so-called spiritual teachers, that, excepting a comparatively few instances, spirits have failed in their attempts to reveal themselves to the civilized portion of mankind. The conditions have, for the most part, been wanting, owing to the above causes, and which have grown out of man's false notions respecting his natural and true relations with the unseen world. The less civilized of our Father's children, in regard to their communion with spirits, have been much more highly favored than their otherwise more fortunate brethren, since it has not been an uncommon circumstance for them to commune with their departed friends.

Many years, my dear parent, have elapsed since I entered the bright abode of the blest—a very little child, yet a very happy one. My first and second birth rapidly succeeded each other; but so little did I know, from actual experience, of my rudimental condition, that I have never realized the change. I have no memory of my earth-life, yet I know from observation and reflection, that I am to some extent the loser by my premature birth into the spiritual state. I have, it is true, measurably obtained, since then, that knowledge of exterior nature which I should have acquired, in the flesh, on the globe which gave me birth, as an independent, individualized existence.

My life here has been a charmed one; enrapturing scenes of beauty being constantly presented to my view, like the ever-varying landscapes delineated on the canvas by a skillful artist. Now is seen a beautiful silvery lake on whose translucent bosom floats the graceful swan, bending his pliant neck, as if proudly conscious of his surpassing beauty; and anon, among the lilies of this lake, which appear like gems placed on a virgin brow, shoots a tiny barque, freighted with angelic children. Then is presented a bolder view, of towering mountains and wide-extended plains, with the accompanying characteristics of hill and dell.

In answer to a question which would naturally suggest itself to your mind, respecting the means by which I have become acquainted with that knowledge of the external world which I should have gained in it, I would say it has been acquired by frequent visits to the earth. I have been accustomed to accompany you, father, in your daily walks, and to study, through you and mother, those elementary lessons which are so essential to the full development of the spirit. Your son Theodore, though nearly forgotten by you, has not been far distant. The time is fast approaching, and is near at hand, when man's spiritual nature and destiny will be much more fully comprehended by the world. Then spirit-manifestations and spirit-intercourse will be considered as natural as for the sun to rise in the eastern heavens. Spirits highly elevated in love and wisdom, would not descend from their exalted position except to teach, for their attractions are upward, but their mission is to instruct those below them, from which they derive much happiness. You know, father, how much pleasure it gives you to impart knowledge to others. How much greater then is our enjoyment, whose minds are intensely more susceptible of real joys! Your spiritual mission on earth has just begun, and we are endeavoring to impress your mind with the sacred importance of its fulfilment. Give unto others that we give unto you, and you shall receive abundantly. I occupy a place which has not yet been opened to your perception. Prepare yourself, my dear father, for its higher and more glorious unfoldings, by first gaining that knowledge which pertains to the lower degrees, and you will thereby become elevated to the higher spiritual planes, and increase your knowledge of things celestial, and greatly develop and enlarge your sphere of usefulness.

THEODORE."

The alleged motives for our existence in this rudimental sphere, is the necessity of contrast to enable us to appreciate the immunity from suffering of the higher spheres. Infants in this respect are at a disadvantage; but being unable to appreciate their deficiency, do not grieve therefor.

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'twere folly to be wise."

## MORAL INFLUENCE OF SPIRITUALISM.

Among the best precepts afforded by the gospel, is that of laying up treasure in Heaven, in preference to seeking to become rich in this world. To pursue the last-mentioned course is alleged to disqualify us more or less for entering Heaven. Certainly, however, honest efforts for the acquisition of wealth is the corner-stone of human prosperity—and money seems in most instances necessary to the effectual exercise of that fellow feeling, in the cultivation of which human virtue pre-eminently consists.

How can a man display charity, hospitality, or contribute his *means* and *time* to objects of philanthropy, unless he beforehand lay up wealth? How could the Samaritan have assisted the traveler, who had been maltreated by thieves, had he not taken care to have something beforehand, not only for himself, but for the needy? But still the precept, lay up treasure for thyself in Heaven, is precisely the course which Spiritualism indicates. Precepts may lead, but examples will draw. Those who have gone before us to eternal life, furnish us not only precepts, but examples also. They furnish exemplifications of the consequences of their conduct, if followed. With few exceptions, my intercourse has been with those only who did lay up treasure in Heaven, by doing on earth as they would have others to do unto them. Of the spirits with whom I have communicated, only two alleged or indicated that they were unhappy.

Of these I was informed one bore an ill character upon earth, the other admitted that he was drowned in consequence of getting dead drunk. On being asked if he were happy, he answered "damned happy." In reply to an inquiry whether he was sorry to have quitted this life, he replied in the affirmative. He manifested a desire for tobacco and grog, having evidently been a sailor, who had served under an officer who was present.

Thus it appears, that punishment in the spirit-world is caused by the ungratified cravings of bad passions. Of course, the more of these a spirit carries with him, the greater his misery—while the more he founds his happiness on the indulgence of good propensities, the greater his power and opportunities of enjoyment. I am informed by a spirit of the fifth sphere, that one of her enjoyments is looking after children whose parents have not yet followed them to the spheres.

Believing in the existence of a spirit-world, where there are thirty-six grades of existence, corresponding to degrees of purity and intellectual acquirement; purity alone, giving exaltation merely, while cultivation of mind secures breadth of consideration, we have, in the first place, to adhere strictly to truth, honesty, justice, benevolence, and doing as we would be done by, to reach a sphere higher in proportion as we are more successful. Yet, among those on the same plane, superiority in mental attributes, gives precedence.

Nothing is better known, than "while precepts may lead, examples draw," and that subjection to bad examples, even when checked by good precepts, is generally irresistible with the young. But when there are no precepts to check, but, on the contrary, ill counsel, as well as bad example, few human beings, however well constituted organically, could resist the tendency of such educational evil. Let bad hereditary

propensities be superadded, and what can ensue but a climax of wickedness? Manifestly, however, all this is independent of any choice on the part of the victim. A high degree of virtue, may, consistently, be inferred to result, if all these conditions be inverted, and good precepts, good examples, co-operate in improving a mind of the opposite kind, one which owes to its progenitors goodness of heart and high intellectual capacity.

Much stress is laid upon free will, but is will ever free from the joint control of reason and passion? What is will, if it be not the resultant of the conflict or co-operation of these? It may be a question, whether without passions, a man would act at all, but certainly he would act like an idiot or baby, so far as his will should be entirely independent of his reason.

It must be conceded then, that the prodigious diversity between virtue and vice, is the consequence of contingencies, which are no more under the control of the individual affected, than the color of his hair or the number of cubits in his stature.

The great features of the spiritual religion are, as I understand them, as follows :

Its foundation is laid in the belief of an all-good Deity, whose power is manifested to us by the immensity, profundity, sublimity, ingenuity and adaptation of the means to the ends in the creation ascribed to the co-operation, if not origination of his mind.

The Bible of the Spiritualist is the book of Nature ; the only one which by inward or outward evidence can be ascribed to divine authorship.

In this book we read as matters of fact, that there is an infinite series of gradation in the rank of animals as well as variety in their dispositions and propensities. This may be seen from the half-animal, half-vegetable, known as the polypus, up to man ; there being gradations not only of genera, but of species and varieties.

Thus amid men there are various races rising one above the other in development, from the Bushman, Hottentot, or lowest Negro, up to the most highly-developed race of White men.

But when we have passed through the gradation of the races, we have to enter upon that of individuals, who in the same race are by diversity of organization or education, or of both, made extremely different as to intellectual, moral and scientific pre-eminence.

It is difficult for human reason to reconcile the immense diversity in the lot of the creatures of God with impartiality ; but that such is the law of Nature is self-evident : it is an intuitive truth. To reconcile it with the all-goodness of God, we must suppose a limitation of power ; and that it has not been beyond his power to put created beings more nearly upon a level. But as Seneca observes, all have received more than they had a claim for. Some may think that the parable of the hiring of laborers for a vineyard conveys an idea like that of the Roman sage.

These considerations being premised, it would seem that punishment in the spirit-world is only the carrying out of the same system, excepting that while the deficiencies or vices which have arisen in this world become a punishment in the next, they also operate as the means of improvement, or to use the language of that world, of "*progression.*" It may be inferred that as in this world the power of the Deity, although commensurate with the all but infinite universe in which we exist, yet

was so restricted by conditions as to induce that enormous diversity of position in the scale of animation, which has been presented to view, yet in the world to come these defects and vices are liable to be remedied; and though they re-act upon their victim, it is with a view to his own ultimate benefit. There is not a malevolent devil to seize the poor miscreant, and like the savage Indian, torture him with a fiend-like pleasure. He is regarded with compassion; and as soon as contrition is induced, treated with sympathy by the higher spirits, and assisted by counsel and enlightened by instruction. Unable any longer to indulge his bad propensities, the desire of rising to a higher level becomes a passion. Intellectual and social pleasures begin to be enjoyed. So long as he remains under the influence of his mundane appetites, he has to consort with spirits who are similarly actuated; they read each other's minds and thus are made acquainted with the deformity of their own. They eventually thus become instrumental in reciprocal correction. So soon as an aspiration for a better state is awakened, they rise to the next plane or circle above that in which they may have been existing; the only difficulty is in taking the first step. Progression grows with its growth and strengthens with its strength, so that all beings may sooner or later attain to the highest sphere in the spirit-world.

It will be perceived that there is no pardon for existing sin. Pardon can only exist as a consequence of reform and in proportion thereto.

An assailant of Spiritualism, who not long since lectured at Sansom Street Hall, founded one of his charges on the commiseration allowed to sinners agreeably to the spirits. But from the examination above given, respecting the origin of the difference between the virtuous and vicious, does it not appear that the fate of the latter is quite as hard as can be reconciled with justice, even under the more benign institution of Spiritualism? According to this, there exist in the spirit-world six spheres, each sub-divided into six circles or planes, forming together a succession of grades in which the soul finds its place according to moral and intellectual merit. The first of the spheres is throughout comparatively hideous in its aspect and disgusting in its inhabitants, who are designated by a dark halo, in lieu of the effulgence which distinguishes spirits of the rest of the spheres. Moreover, this distinguishing effulgence, as well as the beauty of the spirit-world augments with the grade of the being whom it envelops, thus making a series of ranks in society founded on real nobility of head and heart. When it is considered that this immense diversity ensues mainly from contingency in organization, education and greater or less exposure to temptation, it must be clear that the difference made between the good and the bad by Spiritualism, does not fall short of the degree which human reason can reconcile with justice.

The assailant of Spiritualism, to whom allusion was made, while admitting the truth of the evidence given of communication with spirits, explained it by reference to Satan. It is remarkably inconsistent with this idea, that this evidence is of a nature to abrogate the existence, and of course the sovereignty of that imaginary arch-fiend. Again, it can hardly be conceived that the greater commiseration for sinners should come from a malevolent devil, and the urging for everlasting and cruel torture from a sincere disciple of the benevolent Jesus Christ.

But how much then must it shock one who embraces these views,

that in addition to the misfortune of being badly organized, badly educated, and badly tempted, the being subjected to these disadvantages is to be exposed eternally to misery, typified, if not realized, by broiling on burning brimstone!

I am aware that doing away with the more horrible attributes of hell will be alleged to be subversive of one of the restraints upon criminality; but in the first place, it is evident that a man who is restrained from crime solely by the fear of punishment, is only a more prudent villain than one who is not restrained by that selfish apprehension. When a man is deterred from crime only by prudence, hope of reward, or fear of punishment, he ought not to have a higher grade in heaven than the perpetrator of the crime.

But, agreeably to experience, of all restraints upon crime, none are more efficacious than the fear of degradation. The lawyer who will do the bidding of a caucus, (or of a powerful demagogue in the executive office,) in order to get the appointment to the Chief Justiceship, when securely seated therein, will not give a charge which will degrade him in the eyes of the legal profession, and consequently in that of society, as well as in his own estimation. The dishonest gambler, who neglects to pay his tradesman's bill, will not fail to pay his gambling debts. The debtor who will take every advantage in getting a high price for his goods, and who will put off any other payment as long as possible, fails not to pay his note at a bank. Sovereign States, who pay no other claims, take every means to meet the interest on their funded obligations. "Failure" in the one case, in the mercantile adaptation, involves the loss of reputation for good financial faith abroad as well as at home; but the just complaints of domestic claimants, not heard upon the exchange, are unheeded. The great object, in many cases, is not to leave the crime "undone, but to keep it unknown."

The corrupt, selfish politician, who would promote war, in order to give himself an opportunity of emolument or official pre-eminence, when facing the enemy in the field of battle, will *nominally* die for that country whose interests he has sacrificed. But not from the alleged motive will he die; but either to avoid being degraded as a coward, or for the hope of popularity, which may help him to office.

In the spirit-world, all are seen through, and justly estimated, so that degradation and vice, or elevation and virtue, are inevitably associated by spiritual intuition. Yet there is, in my opinion, far more satisfactory proof of the truth of Spiritualism than of any other creed involving immortality; whilst, so far as adopted, it must tend to do away with priestcraft, sectarian malevolence and religious intolerance.

Man will go to the spirits of his ancestors for his religion, not to a fanatical, bigoted, or interested priest. Should spirits actually exist, as supposed, and convey the same religious knowledge all over the world, all men will agree that virtue is to be the means of salvation, not bigotry, under the name of faith.

ROBERT HARE.

On the first spiritual manifestations occurring, the great object of the mass of observers, was to see the physical effects. In the next place, intellectual communications were sought, but these being obtained by a tedious process, it was deemed sufficiently interesting if a few sentences could be made out, or even one. It was, moreover, a great object with inquirers to ascertain by the interchange of language, whether the spirit of a relation or friend were really present, as alleged by the supposed spirit. Hence the communications were very deficient as respects any information of the spirit-world. It is not surprising, therefore, that prejudiced unbelievers should have taken up the idea, that there is nothing inviting in the Heaven of Spiritualism. I hope that, agreeably to the sketch which I have given of the higher spheres, in the preceding pages, there is enough to create an ardent desire to become a dweller in them.

But is it not unreasonable for a person to disdain a state of existence which is by the spirits themselves described as "ineffably" happy? Alluding to the progression, which is to carry spirits eventually among the ministering angels of God, I observed to my spirit-friend, Dr. W. E. Channing, that I did not consider him in Heaven yet. "Were you situated as I am," said he, "you would not say that!"

But let us see how far the ideas of Heaven, as warranted in the Scripture, are comparable with those which have been communicated by spirits, as I have only faintly sketched them.

In a work by the Rev. Mr. Harbaugh, of the German Reformed Church of Lancaster, Pa., a great effort is made to collect all the hints respecting Heaven, which have been given in the Old or New Testaments. This learned divine quotes the following paragraph from Dr. Chalmers:

"The common imagination," says Dr. Chalmers, "that we have a Paradise on the other side of death, is that of a lofty ærial region, where the inmates float in ether, or are mysteriously suspended upon nothing—where all the warm and sensible accompaniments which give such an expression of strength, and life and coloring to our present habitation, are attenuated into a sort of spiritual element; that is, meagre and imperceptible, and utterly uninviting to the eye of mortals here below, where every vestige of materialism is done away, and nothing left but unearthly scenes that have no power of allurements, and certain unearthly ecstasies, with which it is felt impossible to sympathise."

After reading and believing the representations of Heaven, given by the immortal inhabitants of the spirit-world, who can avoid turning in disgust from the portrait thus cited by Dr. Chalmers!

The most favorable idea of Heaven given in Scripture, seems to be that which identifies it with Paradise; in other words, a most beautiful garden. But who would conceive an *eternal* residence in one garden, however superlative its attractions as desirable? The idea of the spheres assumes a succession of gardens, with every pleasure, every joy of which the human heart and intellect are capable; and beyond those gardens, the whole universe is open to us, and an ultimate ministration as angels under our Heavenly Father.

The portraiture cited by Chalmers is not approved of by the Rev. Mr. Harbaugh, but in order to confute it, he does not resort to any better picture given in the Bible, but to reasoning. This shows that learned as he is, and idolatrous as he appears, in worshiping the Bible as an adequate fountain of light, he cannot get from the object of this idolatry, any passage tending to prove the inconsistency of the idea quoted from Chalmers, with Scripture. Were there not the greatest poverty of instruction on this all-important subject, the ideas alleged to exist as above mentioned, upon the high authority of Dr. Chalmers, could never have had sufficient currency to merit notice.

It may be assumed that no Christians can conceive themselves to be better entitled to the joys of Heaven than the twelve apostles of Christ. In order to show how far any expectations of a bliss higher than that afforded by Spiritualism could have been entertained by those disciples consistently with Scripture, I deem it in point to refer to the language held to them by their Divine Master. I subjoin a few lines from Dr. Harbaugh, wherein he quotes the query, put to that Master by the *twelve*, and the consequent reply.

Nothing can be further from my idea of a happy state than the benefaction promised to them in reply.

The query and reply are subjoined, in order to enable the reader to judge of both :—

*Behold, we have left all and followed thee, what shall we have therefor ?*

The Saviour answered the above inquiry when made by Peter, as follows :—*When the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Here is a direct answer by Christ to an inquiry respecting the nature of the reward which his disciples were to have for their merits as his faithful devotees. They are to be made severally worldly dignitaries; each is to sit on a throne, judging a tribe of Israel. That is, they are to have worldly pre-eminence, accompanied of course, by all the vexations attendant on such stations, as well as the uncertainty and limitation arising from liability to death and disease. How weak and worldly-minded must his disciples have been, could such a prospect be alluring to them ! I ask for any sectarian to say in candor, whether a governorship over one of the wealthiest States, the Presidency, or any sovereignty in Christendom, would be deemed a Heaven in comparison with that eternity of ineffable happiness enjoyed by the immortal spirits of the higher spheres ?

Yet Mr. Harbaugh, with the simplicity of blind faith, quotes this without perceiving how meagre is the gospel evidence thus afforded, of the joys awaiting the faithful as a reward for their good conduct in this life.

The following remarks, made by Mr. Harbaugh, demonstrate how partial sectarians are in reading Scripture :

*“ What shall we have therefor ? This is a question that frequently arises in the Christian’s mind, as he endeavors to cheer his oftentimes drooping spirits with a look towards the recompense of reward. What shall we have ? We have left all for thee, and by following thee we have confessed that we are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth. In this world we shall have tribulation, but thou didst overcome the world ; what shall those have who overcome with thee ? ”*

Harbaugh remarks: "Here then there is curiosity which the Saviour himself approved, because he satisfies it. The same pious curiosity still manifests itself in the minds of God's people in their holiest hours, and shall there be nothing revealed to satisfy them? Yes, God will approve of such inquiries, and will grant the influence of that Spirit who leads into all truth, to all those who search the Scriptures for an answer."

Drawing an eloquent picture of the aspiration of the soul for some realization of the vague ideas of the rewards of the faithful in a future state of existence, he exults, that this *curiosity*, as he calls it, should be sanctioned by Christ, "who approves this curiosity because he satisfies it." How does he satisfy it? Is it by holding up the hope of a judgeship for each? It seems it was not then foreseen that instead of performing the part of the Jewish Messiah, with which he thus identified himself, that if gathering together the *chosen* people of God, he was to put forth opinions which were to scatter them through the world. "Woe unto you, Chorazim," &c., for the heinous offence of not admitting him to be both the Messiah and the Son of God.

The promise of the judgeships was quite consistent with the former character, and strengthens the idea that he never pretended to any higher mission. With this, the promise in question is consistent; but is wholly unreconcilable with his divinity, which would make these judgeships worse than giving a stone for bread or a serpent for a fish. In order to have bestowed these judgeships, the Roman Empire must have been subverted.

It seems that if (as stated by the worthy Mr. Harbaugh) *the curiosity of the disciples was truly and correctly satisfied*, that this satisfaction was the sum total of the Heaven with which they were remunerated; since not the slightest hint is given that they were like the penitent thief to be with their object of devotion in Paradise. It would seem on the whole, that the rewards of the thief and the beggar Lazarus were of a more heavenly nature than those promised to the apostles; even had the latter been susceptible of realization, instead of being irreconcilable with the doom which awaited the Hebrews, and consequently a mere *vox et preterita nihil*.

But while in lieu of an eternal progressive happiness, Christ holds up the transient, precarious and limited supremacy from which a truly pious and wise man would turn in disgust, when hell is to be represented we have eternal torments typified by fire and weeping, and gnashing of teeth in *utter darkness*, in despite of this fire.

The situation which Christ, the Son of God, was to have, was to bear manifestly a relation to that of his disciples. His situation would be somewhat analogous to that of Washington, when he was in the Presidential chair, and the thirteen States were governed by as many of his faithful followers in the revolutionary war. Yet Washington did not find his chair worth retaining longer than the good of the country made it important to remain. I am confident that neither would that great man leave his position in the seventh sphere for the Presidency, nor any spirit among those who held the gubernatorial dignity, as suggested, find a governorship now, a motive for leaving their bright abodes in the celestial world.

There is no doubt in my mind, that there being in Scripture so much more stress laid upon the torments of Hell than the joys of Heaven, is

the reason the horror of death is so great among Christians in general. Their practice in this respect is to speak of death as a great calamity. Here and there may be found a believer who is so thoroughly convinced of the efficacy of his peculiar tenets, combined with the absence of criminality and the redeeming influence of repentance, will ensure him a passage to Heaven, but the predominant language is to represent the death of any large number of human beings as a great calamity. Those who are exposed to danger pray most earnestly to be saved, and their death is always a subject treated as a cause for deep regret by surviving friends.

Hence the weeping, the grief, and the mourning called for by custom, the relations and connections wearing black for months; hence the dark, dark hearse, the black pall, and bitter lamentation over the grave, which shows that it is not realized, that Death is only a glorious spiritual birth!!! I am confident that spiritualists will soon abandon a custom, which must on their part be hypocritical, since they must look on death as no more a bereavement, than a happy residence in a foreign country with the means of communication within reach, and a happy reunion foreseen.

When on board of a steamer under way at night, the possibility of her going down occurring to my mind, I felt cheered by the idea that I should not go down with her, but soar to the spirit-world with my immortal friends who would flock to greet my apotheosis.

It has been urged that a most substantial idea of Heaven given in the old Bible, is that of a restoration to Paradise, of which the description gives the idea of an exquisite, beautiful garden; but Spiritualism gives the idea of garden above garden, improving in beauty with their elevation. Then there are thirty-six gradations in all, and in the five happy spheres thirty; so that there is excitement arising from well-rewarded emulation, as a source of interest. Into the idea of Heaven, as suggested in Scripture, intellectual ability and improvement form no part, and give no superiority, whence the tendency of the more strict constructionists to turn a cold shoulder to every acquirement which is not coupled with scriptural knowledge. Neither the Atheneum, nor any library, is to be accessible on Sunday.

If the time devoted at meetings, and at church, were given to the study of the real book of God, how much more learned would be those who thus employ their Sundays! It is held that the lowest and most ignorant person who is educated to believe implicitly the tenets of a sect, when he would by the same process as easily be made to believe any other tenets, is in Heaven to be as high as the most enlightened as well as virtuous man, who has the only merit which can be attached to belief in a high degree, that of ardent desire for truth, and taking the pains to form an opinion for himself. Nay, the ignorant bigot is to be higher in Heaven, if the freethinker alluded to, should not agree with the ghostly adviser of the devoted sectarian, with whom he is compared.

The idea of living in the finest garden which imagination can conceive, without the enjoyments and progression which my father's communication attributes to the spheres, would beget tedium rather than the ineffable happiness which my spirit-friends profess to enjoy. But while one of the Jewish ideas of Heaven in its best form, is thus deficient,

the idea given by the learned Josephus of Hell, is horrible in the extreme, that of Heaven being disgusting. I give it as I find it quoted by the Rev. Mr. Harbaugh:—

“Now as to Hades, wherein the souls of the righteous and unrighteous are detained, it is necessary to speak of it. Hades is a place in the world not regularly finished, a subterraneous region, wherein the light of this world does not shine; from which circumstance, in this region there must be perpetual darkness. This region is allotted as a place of custody for souls, in which angels are appointed as guardians to them, who distribute to them temporary punishment, agreeably to every one’s behavior and manners.

“In this region there is a certain place set apart as a lake of unquenchable fire, whereinto, we suppose, no one hath hitherto been cast, but it is prepared for a day afordetermined by God, in which one righteous sentence shall deservedly be passed upon all men; when the unjust, and those that have been disobedient to God, and have given honor to such idols as have been the vain operations of the hands of men, as to God himself, shall be adjudged to this everlasting punishment as having been the causes of defilement; while the just shall obtain an incorruptible and never fading kingdom. These are now indeed confined in Hades, but not in the same place wherein the just are confined.

“For there is one descent in this region, at whose gate, we believe, there stands an archangel, with a host; which gate, when those pass through that are conducted down by the angels appointed over souls, they do not go the same way, but the just are guided to the right hand, and are led with hymns, sung by the angels appointed over that place, unto a region of light, in which the just have dwelt from the beginning of the world, not constrained by necessity, but ever enjoying the prospect of the good things they see, and rejoicing in the expectation of those new enjoyments which will be peculiar to every one of them, and esteeming those things beyond what we have here; with whom there is no place of toil, no burning heat, no piercing cold; nor any briars there; but the countenances of the fathers and the just which they see always, smile upon them while they wait for the rest and eternal new life in Heaven, which is to succeed this region. This place we call the bosom of Abraham.

“But as to the unjust, they are dragged by force to the left hand, by the angels allotted for punishment, no longer going with a good will, but as prisoners driven by violence; to whom are sent the angels appointed over them to reproach them, and threaten them with their terrible looks, and to thrust them still downwards. Now these angels that are set over these souls, drag them into the neighborhood of hell itself; who, when they are hard by it, continually hear the noise of it, and do not stand clear of the hot vapor itself; but when they have a near view of this spectacle, as of a terrible and exceeding great prospect of fire, they are struck with a fearful expectation of a future judgment, and in effect punished thereby; not only so, but when they see the place (or choir) of the fathers and of the just, even thereby are they punished, for a chaos deep and large is fixed between them; insomuch that a just man that hath compassion upon them cannot be admitted, nor can any one that is unjust, if he were bold enough to attempt it, pass over it.”

So much for Josephus. Mr. Harbaugh subjoins as follows: “This extract is exceedingly interesting. It shows to what extent of distinct-

ness the Jewish ideas of the future state had attained. The dreamlike under-world is here considerably illuminated. The righteous and the wicked are separated, and already share the first fruits of their eternal reward. The righteous are surrounded with intimations and shadowy promises of better things to come, in the expectation of which they are already happy; the wicked are surrounded with tokens and forebodings of more fearful ill, much of which they already suffer in awful expectation.

“Through this picture,” says our good parson, “we see in faint but terrible glimmerings, in the distance, the region of eternal fire, which awaits the wicked, when the judgment day shall remove them from Hades; on the other hand, we see also the dawning of an eternal day for the just, the rest and eternal new life which is to succeed this region. This kingdom of the dead, beyond which the thoughts of men in the early ages did not wander, is considered only as a place of detention for judgment, while the idea of a final state, both for the righteous and the wicked, is believed to exist beyond it.”

How can any person sincerely pretend that those who rely on a happy idea of our immortal life, are indebted for it to the source from which this Hebrew Pharisee derived the impressions given in the preceding quotation? Yet the Pharisees were the only conspicuous Hebrew sect who believed in Heaven. The Sadducees did not believe in immortality.

The history of Lazarus and the rich man, (says Harbaugh, page 168,) “plainly teaches that both the righteous and the wicked on death pass into a fixed and eternal abode, where no change is possible;” and he further states, pp. 169–70, that “the misery of the wicked commences immediately after death, and before the resurrection, and their condition is unchangably fixed.”

According to St. Luke, chapter 16, in the page alluded to above by Harbaugh, we are informed that the wicked, while in the torture of hell fire, are within the view of the righteous, (verse 23.)

The righteous are near enough to converse with those in torment, and yet there is an impassable barrier between them.

The rich man is not tortured for his sins, but simply because he had “*enjoyed good things.*” Yet Abraham, who turned his son, and son’s mother, out in the wilderness to starve, and twice exposed his wife to prostitution, is represented as enjoying the reward due to the righteous.

How little sincere, heartfelt belief there can be in the words of Christ, may be estimated from the fact, that scarcely any Christian but seeks for the good things of this life, instead of qualifying themselves for Heaven, by undergoing the rewarded privations of a Lazarus.

In this respect, if in no other, there is an immense superiority in the conceptions of futurity, given by my immortal advisers, in comparison with those attributed as above to Christ.

It is utterly unintelligible to my mind, why repentance with reform, should not avail after, as well as before death, as it is represented to be in the spirit-world.

Thus, there is a coincidence between these representations of Josephus, and those of the Gospel, so far as that both represent the righteous as witnessing the torments of the wicked. Would not such a situation make Heaven a Hell to good-hearted angels?

According to Matthew, (chapter 25, v. 34) the blessed, after the day

of judgment, are to *inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world*. Of the joys that kingdom would afford there is no description. But, as usual, Hell is made sufficiently horrible, (chapter 25, v. 41)—“Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

It has been urged that human conduct is so much dependent on organization, education, temptation and example, neither of which are within the option of any soul, that the orthodox doctrine respecting sin, is manifestly wrong. But admitting the culpability which that doctrine imputes, it has been shown that the gradations of sinfulness between the extremes of vice and virtue are innumerable. Suppose for each gradation, a strand in a ladder, like that of which Jacob dreamed, and human souls supported severally at elevations commensurate with their respective pretensions. This adjustment being made, suppose a plane at any level to divide the vertical row into two portions, all below the plane being considered as goats, all above the plane as sheep. Evidently between the soul just above, and that just below the plane, there would be only a shade of difference, yet the one would have to go to Hell, the other to Heaven, eternally.

According to Spiritualism, on entering the spirit-world, each soul finds its just level by a sort of moral specific gravity, in which merit is inversely as weight.

Every soul, moreover, has the privilege of reforming, and rising proportionally to the improvement thus obtained.

As blessed kindred spirits all relate,  
 Ev'ry soul may reach Heaven, soon or late.  
 All whose conduct has been mainly right,  
 With lightning speed, may reach that blissful height;  
 While those who selfish, sensual ends pursue,  
 For ages may their vicious conduct rue,  
 Doom'd in some low and loathsome plane to dwell,  
 Made through remorse and shame the sinner's Hell;  
 Yet through contrition and a change of mind,  
 The means of rising may each sinner find.  
 The higher spirits their assistance give,  
 Teaching the contrite how for Heaven to live.

One of the most agreeable conceptions attending our future existence in the spheres, is that of being restored to the appearance of youth; the decrepitude and wrinkles of age, of disease, mutilation, deformity, ugliness, are all avoided in the spiritual body. The insane are restored to reason, the idiot gradually improved in mind.

#### DISCORDANCES AS TO THE WHEREABOUT OF THE SCRIPTURAL HEAVEN. INSTINCTIVE IMPRESSION AS TO HEAVEN BEING OVERHEAD.

There is no small degree of contradiction in Scripture respecting the locality of Heaven. In addressing the thief, Paradise is spoken of as Heaven, by Christ. When he went to Heaven, he was alleged to be seen ascending. Elijah was carried up in sight of Elisha. Jacob's dream represents Heaven as reached by a ladder. The commandment speaks of “*Heaven above and the Earth beneath, and of waters under the Earth.*” Yet Christ is alleged to have descended into Hell, and to have arisen on the third day. Josephus represents both Heaven and Hell as

forming subterranean abodes, and the idea of their proximity is corroborated by the conversation between Abraham and the rich man broiling in hell-fire, so as to want a little water to cool his tongue. Moses treats short life as the punishment for not honoring parents, and God is alleged to have held out the promised land to Moses, instead of comforting him by a clairvoyant view of a place of blissful enjoyment in some heavenly region. Hence the Sadducees did not believe in the immortality of the soul.

Christ has no better reward for his apostles, than visionary, temporal judgements, which neither did, nor could come into existence.

We have seen that the Hebrew idea, as described by Josephus, places the future world, both Heaven and Hades, under ground; nevertheless, in a map accompanying the writings of the same author, Paradise is represented as having been situated on the river Tigris, near the Persian Gulf; of course upon the terrestrial surface.

There seems, nevertheless, an instinctive propensity to assume that Heaven is overhead. Clergymen all look upwards when they address God, and the Thespian artists universally follow their example. Whenever Heaven is referred to, it is customary, I believe, for all devout persons to turn their eyes in the same direction.

But if Heaven be above, what does this term *above* mean? It practically designates a vertical direction relatively to this globe at any point over which a speaker, who uses the word, may stand. Consequently, it indicates a space overhead having everywhere the same relative position to the terrestrial surface; in other words, a region concentric with that surface like that within which the clouds float. This floating takes place rarely at a less distance than two miles, or more than six miles.

The spiritual spheres are estimated, as already mentioned, as being between sixty and one hundred and twenty miles from the earth's surface. They are, therefore, analogous in position to the region of the clouds, though at a much greater distance and vastly more capacious.

#### INDEPENDENT EXISTENCE OF THE SPIRIT-WORLD.

The conclusion at which I have arrived is, that the spirit-world is dependent for its existence on materials and principles peculiar to itself, however they may be an analogy or correspondence with our world as to results.

Agreeably to the inhabitants, that world is lighted by an appropriate sun, concentric with our sun. By the light of our sun their regions are not affected, while ours is equally unaffected by the rays of their sun.

They breathe a peculiar vital air, inscrutable to our tests. \* Nevertheless, our *spiritual* organism is nourished by that inscrutable elastic fluid, which in the process of respiration is associated with our gross oxygen.

Nearly thirty years ago, I called attention to the fact, that Fishes living in water, which consists of an equivalent of oxygen for every equivalent of hydrogen, were nevertheless dependent on the precarious supply of atmospheric oxygen contained in that liquid, being furnished with gills for the purpose of its absorption.

This surmise is confirmed by the higher spirits.

Possibly the phenomena, classed under the name of Ozonification, may be owing to the activity of this vital air under certain conditions.

It may be expedient here to quote some paragraphs from Taylor's Physical Theory of another life. There seems to be very little discrepancy between the ideas suggested by that author, and those communicated to me by the spirits.

Taylor conceives that the spirit-world may co-exist above, and throughout this world, unseen and unfelt by mortals. "That within the space occupied by the visible and ponderable universe, and on all sides of us, there is existing and moving, another element, fraught with another species of life—corporeal indeed, and various in its orders, but not open to the cognizance of those who are confined to the conditions of animal organization—not to be seen nor heard, nor to be felt by man. Our present conjecture reaches to the extent of supposing that within the space encircled by the sidereal revolutions, not less real than the one we are at present conversant with; a universe elaborate in structure, and replete with life; life agitated with momentous interests, and perhaps by frivolous interests; a universe conscious perhaps of the material spheres, or unconscious of them, and firmly believing (as we do) *itself* to be the only reality. Our planets in their sweep do not perforate the structure of this invisible creation; our sun does not scorch its plains; for the two collateral systems are not connected by any active affinities."

"This would bring 'the things which are not seen,' indeed, near to and around us. To enter the other world would not be so much a removal in space as just to be made loose from, or to become insensible to the conditions of this life. Death will be only the destruction or disappearance of human and earthly affinities, and directly we shall be surrounded by affinities adapted to our new state of existence, and shall find ourselves a congenial home in and around our present habitation.

"Much is argued in favor of this theory. It is said to be made highly probable by the known truths of physical science. An unseen world, in all respects material, inhabited by corporeal beings, it is said, is not impossible. There are material elements which are not cognizable to any of our senses, except by a round of research and experiment, and then only in their remote effects, as, for instance, electricity. The atmosphere also, and light, are material, and yet so subtle as almost entirely to evade our unassisted observation; and may there not be still others as yet to us unknown? We are related to, and become acquainted with the external world by the medium of the five senses; but who will say that there are not other senses hidden in passibility in our nature which may by means of other affinities communicate with a world far more refined in its constitution, with which we cannot now come in contact?

"It is further supposed that this invisible world around us is the after stage of the present life; and as it is a stage of being in all respects superior to this, it may be that its inhabitants have a knowledge of us, though we have not of them, just as we are acquainted with grades of animalculæ life beneath us, when it can hardly be supposed that they know anything of our existence. Hence, too, in some exceptive cases it may be possible for them to break through the veil of separation, and appear in various ways unto men on the platform of human life. In this way we might account for the various appearances of supernatural beings which are reported by popular belief, and which are in some cases substantiated by evidences almost too strong to be set aside. The origin of presentiments and tokens is also accounted for on this supposi-

tion. Then we are indeed 'surrounded by a cloud of witnesses,' who stand around, or bend over us, and look with deep interest upon the struggle of life, and when they see it unequal in the case of the saints, they break through in their ardor, and become ministering spirits to those who are heirs of eternal life."

It is also supposed that these beings, in the world unseen, may have capacities to communicate with the remotest inhabitants of God's universe. The facilities of communication may be so great in these ethereal climes, that space is annihilated, and the different hosts of intelligences in the wide universe may commune with each other and God, as one family in their "father's house."

Of the locality of this inscrutable spirit-world the author's ideas are extremely vague, or he would not have suggested the idea of its being perforated by any planet. The Heaven of Spiritualism is more than one hundred thousand miles below the moon. It is not, therefore, liable to be perforated even by this satellite.

*Shortly will be published, Dr. Hare's Narrative of Experimental Investigation of the Theoretical Manifestations which led to his conversion, &c., &c.*

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